

QUANTA

MAGAZINE

1984 TO 2010

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Volume 27 Issue 3
June/July 2010

Information on the Association

Membership of QUANTA, the independent QL user group, is by annual subscription. The Membership Secretary can supply full details. Copies of the association's constitution & annual accounts are available from the Secretary. There is an extensive software library. There are active national subgroups. Details are given in the Member's Guide and in this magazine.

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Ruth Fegley - OBITUARY

Sarah Gilpin

Ruth Fegley died on May 27th 2010.

Herb Schaff wrote on the ql-users list, 'Those who knew Ruth Fegley will be saddened by the news of her death.'

She was an active QL enthusiast and a leader in the CATS computer club (USA) during the 80's and 90's.'

QUANTA extends their sympathy to Ruth's family and many friends.

EDITORIAL

John Gilpin

Our readers can be excused for thinking that they have found the first mistake in this issue - the by-line bearing the name of the old editor - but, I regret to say that this is not an error. Tony Hill, who took over as editor from the A.G.M. in April and who had been working along side me since December 2009 and who produced the April/May issue single handed when I found myself unable to find the time to support him, has, for whatever reasons, decided that a place on the QUANTA Committee and the job of Magazine Editor is not for him and has resigned.

I regret this decision greatly as I truly believe that Tony has all the necessary skills to do this job and had he carried on, he would have enabled me to spend my time on other things which QUANTA has in mind. However, I do not want to dwell on what might have been and am ready to dust off the Magazine file and try to match the quality of Tony's issue for April/May. Grateful thanks go to Tony from myself and also the rest of the committee for the time and effort he has so willingly given us.

The summer months always leave us with very little new content for the magazine and this year is no exception. Dilwyn, I understand, is recovering from the effects of flooding at home following the assistance of a trusted D. I. Y'er who has managed to put a number of nail holes in

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his water pipes and that, combined with the reduced amount of QL News is likely to have a knock-on effect on this issue.

However, fresh from our Holiday in Norfolk, Sarah has identified what has been (and it's still ongoing at the time of writing) some very interesting comments on ql-users list recently and has her nose to the grind stone to report back to you as well as let her own views be known.

Having completed the task which prevented me from assisting Tony with the last issue, I was called upon to provide some help on a rescue mission for an old QLER and former member of QUANTA for many years whose extreme bad luck resulted in his life being turned completely upside down when his home burned down in March. (see article in this issue). This whole situation has greatly restored my belief in people's willingness to help in a fellow human being's disaster and my grateful thanks go to all those who helped QUANTA to start to put things right again.

In April, I really thought that having stepped down from my, then, current jobs of Treasurer and Membership Secretary and also Magazine Editor, that I would have time to help Dan and Keith with the development of the QUANTA Web Site and continue my work on scanning and OCRing all the QUANTA Magazines since February 1984 (Vol. 1 Iss. 1) to provide a fully searchable record for our members in PDF Format housed on the web site. However, it rather looks as though these will have to be put back on the back-burner for a while but I hope to progress with the Magazine Archive whenever time permits.

When we first offered the Magazine as an eMag - some years ago now - it was thought that we should try to restrict the resulting file size to not more than 0.5 MB in order to make it more accessible to those members who only had slow dial-up access to the Internet and to make sure that we were inside any limits set for email attachments by the various ISPs operating at that time. I regret that, in hindsight, this restriction in file size meant that the resolution of the images had to be reduced so low that, from time to time, the resulting images were "viewable but not always readable" as Tony Hill commented recently.

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About a year ago, Duncan Neithercut suggested that we might try to make the eMag a little more appealing by introducing a bit of colour and by improving the resolution. I took this on board and found that I could do both of these things at the expense of the file size and Committee decided to offer the eMag with a file size of about 1 MB. Response from our eMag readers was very positive and resulted in an increasing number of members signing up for the eMag (especially those overseas who are otherwise charged a postage surcharge on top of their membership subscription for the Paper version).

Following Tony's very successful work on the electronic version of the Sinclair QL User Guide (available to members from the Librarian and well worth having one!) he did extensive work on the eMag to make it both readable and viewable. As the resulting file size was just over 2.5 MB, myself and the other members of the QUANTA Committee felt that we had overdone things a bit but a recent poll of eMag members has shown that the vast majority of them prefer the "enhanced" version and are prepared to accept the increase in file size. It just goes to show how we are all improving our facilities with High Speed Broadband etc. The low resolution version will, however, remain available for the benefit of those who require the lower file size. Ultimately, we hope to be able to put the eMag into the 'Members Only' area of the web site when this feature becomes available later this year to enable all members with Internet access to be able to download it for themselves.

If any of the NON eMag members would like to see a copy of the "enhanced" eMag, please send me an email with "Sample eMag" in the subject line and I will send you the latest copy.

COMMITTEE Précis

Alison Southern

QUANTA Committee are still working on a number of projects but these are now being interrupted by annual holidays so, really, there is very little to report. The committee have not met since the day of the A.G.M. although they are discussing a couple of points by email.

[Perhaps Committee will be able to report back more fully on their progress in the next Issue - Ed]

The summer months always seem to be short of material for the magazine and it appears from Geoff Wicks' editorial in QL Today that we are not the only ones to feel the pinch. Is this the result of people being on holiday or just preferring to be out of doors in the fine weather rather than huddled over a computer? Probably a bit of both.

[Don't forget the Football World Cup - although after the England V Germany match, perhaps we should!! - Ed]

Committee thought that we had found an excellent replacement for John Gilpin as Magazine Editor when Tony Hill volunteered to take on the role. We are disappointed that Tony feels that there is too much involved and that he cannot undertake this role, but our many thanks to Tony for an exceedingly good magazine V27 12 April/May 2010. Particular thanks are given for your efforts on the eMag and the improved quality achieved.

Are there any members out there who are prepared to volunteer for either the post of Treasurer/Membership Secretary or Magazine Editor?

The apathy of our members towards attending the A.G.M. this year was as expected, but is still very disappointing. A frequent discussion is on the future of the QL, and therefore QUANTA, but both will die from APATHY quicker than from any other cause. If workshops and the A.G.M. are not attended then they will stop and the A.G.M. will become a half hour meeting wherever the most members are likely to attend. It is time to stop the moaning about nothing happening and get on and MAKE IT HAPPEN – QUANTA is not just the Committee, it is all our members and this year barely 10% of you bothered to attend.

There is a current long running thread on the ql-users list regarding the future of the QL and which I have drawn from for this article. Some of the suggestions put forward have been considered before, such as promoting QPC. Suggestions have been made that QUANTA should actively support new software and hardware projects, but from earlier surveys carried out any such project would be for a small percentage of our members and we do not have the funds to more than touch the surface of the costs involved. QUANTA will always look at a business plan for any new project.

Rich Mellor has told us he has a mailing list of over 1000 QL Users of which 523 are in the UK.

Geoff Wicks wrote:-

“We also know how many UK Quanta members and how many UK QL Today readers there are. A little bit of arithmetic suggests the UK community is very different from how we envisage it.

“Suppose we took Rich's list and removed from it all the Quanta members. We then went through it a second time and removed all the remaining QL Today readers. Finally we go through it a third time removing all the remaining subscribers to this list. After these three operations we have removed far less than half of the names on this list.

“In other words if we divided the UK QL community into two groups that we could call the "organised group" and the "non-organised group", the non-organised group would be the larger of the two. It sounds almost unbelievable but the majority of UK QLers have no need for Quanta, QL Today or the ql-users list.

“In the organised group we have very little knowledge of the people in the non-organised group and little desire to learn about them. There is a large part of the QL universe that is ripe for exploration.

“Now three questions to think about:

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1: Suppose someone from the non-organised group visited two QL websites - Dilwyn's and Quanta's. To which of the two websites would he be the more likely to return and why?

2: A couple of years ago two UK traders ceased active trading after making a loss for several years. A third trader remained and is running a successful QL/retro business. Over a 2 year period he has also provided Quanta with a quarter of its income by trading on their behalf. How has he achieved this?

3: Quanta's recent survey was publicised by Quanta itself; on this list; in the news columns of QL Today; and to all people on Rich's list. Which of these four would provide the largest potential number of respondents?

“Maybe we in the organised group need a Galileo moment.”

In reply to Geoff, the reason behind the 2010 survey of QL Users was to try and establish who and where such Users reside, a bit about the systems they use and the purpose they are used for. If there are 523 users in the UK and the survey was available through QUANTA and the ql-users list etc, why have we had so few replies (less than 10% of the 523 UK users)?

A frequent snipe is that the Committee does not do enough (workshops, projects or support). The Committee is currently seven enthusiastic members of QUANTA who are prepared to do SOMETHING – it may not be enough or as much as QUANTA members would like or the ql-users contributors would like – BUT it is more than many others can be bothered to do. Currently we have active support from Rich Mellor, which is invaluable (Thank you, Rich) and verbal support from QL Today and Geoff Wicks but not many others.

Comments in the past have been made that QUANTA workshops in the Northwest and the Southeast of England are too far for many people to travel. How many of those same people are prepared to travel to Vienna and other European venues for a workshop? – or is it that this can be a mini holiday? In an effort to encourage the non distance travellers to attend a workshop, the venue for the last two Annual General Meetings has been the Midlands (half way between the NW and SE).

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|---|-----------------------|
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| QMENU Version 8 - New! with new, printed Manual | [V8.02] EUR 24,90 |
| QMENU Version 8 - Update from earlier Versions, also with printed manual | EUR 17,90 |
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Discounting those who came to 'QL is 25' as a 'special event' the attendance in 2010 was very disappointing. Most disappointing is the complete lack of members from the South – we had one from the Dorset Group and one from the Isle of Wight – not a very strong representation from the southern half of England! Where were the active members from the London and Surrey Subgroups? There are no longer enough members in the UK (regardless of whether we include Rich's mailing list) to justify 'local' workshops that are attended by only a few members. The only other option is for members to TRAVEL.

For many years members from SQLUG, NEMQLUG and the individuals from Hull and Derby have travelled the length and breadth of England to attend workshops and the A.G.Ms. They are also those who are prepared to stand for Committee. Are there deep and dark reasons why no-one travels NORTH to workshops but only SOUTH? It is the complete lack of support that caused the annual Byfleet and Portslade workshops to be discontinued – workshops are just not viable for an attendance of less than 20.

Malcolm Cadman has offered to run a workshop at the London Sub-groups headquarters and Roy Brereton has offered to organise a workshop at Portishead. At what cost? – And to whom? There is no charge to members for attending a workshop, so there is no return for the outlay.

From my point of view as a member of QUANTA, the ql-users list is used for solving queries and making comments on the lack of progress forward. Are any of the contributors actively DOING anything towards future progress? Or are they of the opinion that having made the point it is SOMEONE ELSE'S job to find and achieve the solution. It is a problem that concerns all QL Users, whether members of an organisation or not. The QL will fade away through APATHY and for no other reason because people are content with the system they use as it is and no-one wants the expense of providing anything new, as our Traders have shown after years of making loses.

As far as QUANTA is concerned we shall not give up until the last QL User has gone. BUT we cannot do this without ACTIVE support from our members.

Minerva Manual

With thanks to Tony Firshman, I have now placed a replacement manual for the Minerva mk I and mk II on my website.

It is available to download in PDF format from

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/docs/manuals/index.html>

Just follow the links at the top down to the TF Services section and find the entry for Minerva.

Lear PCB Design Updated

Malcolm Lear has now released v7.16 of his PCB Design program, now including PDF file export. It is available to download from the Graphics program page on my website at

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/graphics/index.html>

Here's a summary of the changes in this and the previous version:

v7.16:

Block elements are all increased in size by 1 mil to ensure overlap when creating export files.

Export readme files now include the statement: 'All Files Viewed from Top'

PDF export now supported.

A3 size paper now supported for postscript and PDF export.

v7.15:

Logo improved and repositioned slightly in the vertical.

Metric to imperial conversion calculator.

Project loading selection no longer wraps.

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Art file format Version 0 (Pluto CAD) conversion improved.

Area mirror and rotate no longer effect the zero offset. This has been a serious problem on ALL previous versions. Fixing this leaves only PDF export on the long term 'to do' list.

Text trace width can now be resized. Broken since version 6.00!!!

Default new label vertical spacing reduced from 40 to 35 mil.

New label now positioned beneath the current label.

Layer on/off status is now stored in the project file.

Website Makeover

After a lot of prompting from my son, I have finally got around to giving my website a bit of a makeover. I've tried to give the site a more modern and fresh look, without affecting the content too much.

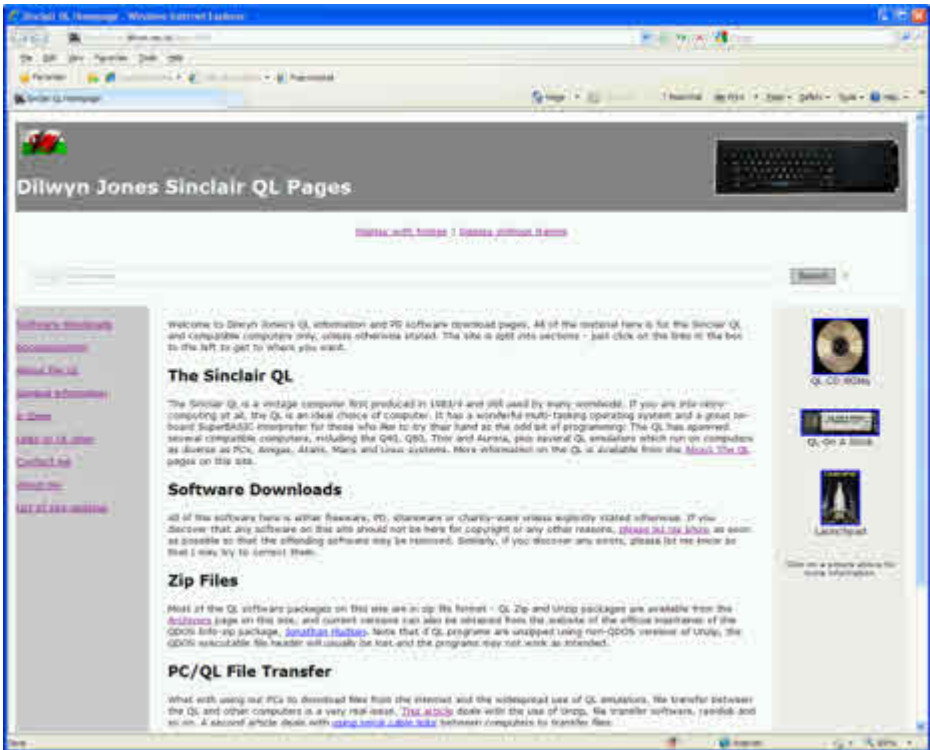
I've added a little Google Custom Search Engine to the home page on my website. It's set up to concentrate on searching for Sinclair QL related pages, although it's still being fine-tuned and tweaked for best results, and so on.

It appears below the heading on my home page and when you enter a search term and click on Search, it expands the page with a list of results, like the usual search engine results. Those can be cleared when finished with by clicking on the X next to the SEARCH button. It will show some adverts but that's a small price to pay for getting free use of this facility.

I'd be interested in receiving feedback on whether you find it useful or not and any suggestions you may have!

It does take a little while longer for the home page to load, but it should be more than worth the small delay.

<http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/index.html>



My new- look QL Homepage

Austrian QL Meeting Pictures

Several people have put pictures of the Austrian QL meeting online. First, Gerhard Plavec (the organiser) has added pictures to his site:

<http://kuel.org/>

Urs König has also placed several pictures online:

<http://tinyurl.com/ql-vienna-2010-pics>

and some more pictures from Tony Firshman

<http://tfs.firshman.co.uk/ql/showphotos/Austria-Prottes-20100604/index.htm>

QCF Card?

After the Austrian QL meeting, Urs König wrote of a possible project discussed at the meeting:

"Then there are some QL soft- and hardware projects in the thinking. Some are somehow vague but some are quite real. To name just one for now, the so-called QCF card for the QL ROM port as discussed at the Austrian QL meeting last weekend is in a stage of use case/requirements/business case now. Think of it as a tiny card (similar to ROMdisq) which hosts a very basic LINUX based computer (the host, the heavy part of the firmware/driver), takes a standard FAT(32) formatted CF card and have direct r/w access to the FAT filesystem (DOS1_ to DOS8_ similar to QPC2) plus full QXL.WIN (named QXL1_ to QXL8_ to prevent clashes for users with real harddisks attached to the QL) support. I'm not fit in electronics (anymore), so all I can do is to make a business blueprint and later help with project management."

No guarantee as yet that it will come to anything, but we can hope!

London QL Group Changes

Malcolm Cadman writes:

The London Group is moving over from 10 meetings a year, to 8 meetings a year.

In 2010 the Group will take a two month break in July and August, and then resume Meetings in September.

The Group will not meet in December 2010.

Therefore the next 3 Meetings will be - September, October and November in 2010.

The details of the new 8 Meetings scheduled for 2011, will be announced nearer the time.

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Vintage Computer Festival

This year saw the celebration of retro and vintage computers over a two day Vintage Computer Festival being held at Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire, the home of the National Computer Museum and also home of the World War II code-breakers, who cracked the German Enigma machine.

Rich Mellor of RWAY Software attended this event on 19th-20th June with a selection of his stock. He said after the event: "I was there representing the QL and other Sinclairs, plenty of people talking about the QL and asking about its capabilities and differences from the Spectrum. Quite a few people walked off with Quanta and QL Today magazines and subscription forms, so hopefully, there may be new subscribers. Over 1800 people attended over the 2 days, so I am sure I did enough to spread the word!"

Malcolm Cadman supplied a couple of links to articles about the Vintage Computer Festival:

ZDNetWeek Newsletter for June 25, 2010

<http://path.cnetdirectintl.com/s/156w0/eu803812011777>

A tour of the UK's Vintage Computer Festival.

The original logic board of a 1975 Cray and Twitter on a ZX Spectrum are among the photos from the UK's first vintage computer festival, held at Bletchley Park.

<http://path.cnetdirectintl.com/s/68981/w3803812011789>

GST written QL software is public domain now!

After months if not years of research, seeking, talks and other communication Urs König is proud to announce that Jeff Fenton, founder and owner of GST and legal successor, has declared all GST software written for the Sinclair QL as public domain. This includes 68K/OS, the Assembler, QC, Editor, Macro Assembler (QMAC), Linker, Demos. It includes sources and documentation, even if the sources from every package have survived to this century.

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The packages are available for download on the following webpage:

<http://tinyurl.com/QL-SW-GST>

Original message:

Von: Jeff Fenton

Gesendet: Donnerstag, 10. Juni 2010 22:20

An: Urs Koenig

Betreff: Re: GST QL software as public domain / your GST/QL story.

<snip>

I confirm that I am happy to announce that all GST software written for the QL is now declared public domain and may be freely used and copied by anyone. It or any derivative products may NOT be copied or sold for profit.

<snip>

Jeff

This can be seen as another brick in the wall of preserving QL assets. Urs calls this a milestone in the Sinclair QL Preservation Project (SQPP). To have access to all preserved stuff visit the specific webpage:

<http://tinyurl.com/sqpp25>



The GST Assembler Software

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News About Sir Clive!

Urs König writes:

After a few years of silence Sir Clive Sinclair gets more and more public interest again. After last years rush with Sir Clive (BBC's Micro Men and Electric Dreams programmes), his wedding to a former Lap dancer this spring and his 70th birthday on June 30th, the appearance of the recent pop song by Electric Disorder proves that Sir Clive Sinclair has become a part of Britain's pop culture.

Watch the music video of Electric Disorder pop song "Clive Sinclair" on 'YouTube:'

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ub7FH0c2vO4>

You can even buy the song on iTunes if you like.



*Sir Clive Sinclair and his wife
Angie Bowness*

QL Disk Format

Norman Dunbar has made available via his website a page on the QL disk formats, including DD, HD and QLWA hard disk format.

The floppy disk formats are at

<http://qdosmsg.dunbar-it.co.uk/doku.php?id=qdosmsg:fs:dsdd>

and the QLWA hard disk format details at

<http://qdosmsg.dunbar-it.co.uk/doku.php?id=qdosmsg:fs:qlwa>



Norman Dunbars disk format pages

Creating a PDF from SBASIC

Dilwyn Jones

Malcolm Lear has kindly given me permission to include a listing based on routines within his PCB Design program, showing how a QL BASIC program can write out a simple PDF file.

The term "PDF" stands for Portable Document Format, a file format created by Adobe many years ago. As the name implies, it's meant to be a system allowing a largely universal means of distributing documents which should be viewable on most systems. To this end, Adobe allows free use of the Adobe Reader program - most Windows users will have a copy of this and I'm sure Mac users will have such a program too. On the QL, Jonathan Hudson's port of Ghostscript available from my website's Ghostscript page or from his website at

www.daria.co.uk/qdos/

should be able to load PDF documents, although I've not tried it myself.

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Issue 4 of QL Today Volume 14 was ready earlier than scheduled to be available at the Vienna Show - again with 25% extra pages! Back issues with extremely interesting Tony Tebby articles available! Become part of Volume 15 - subscribe now!

QUANTA Magazine

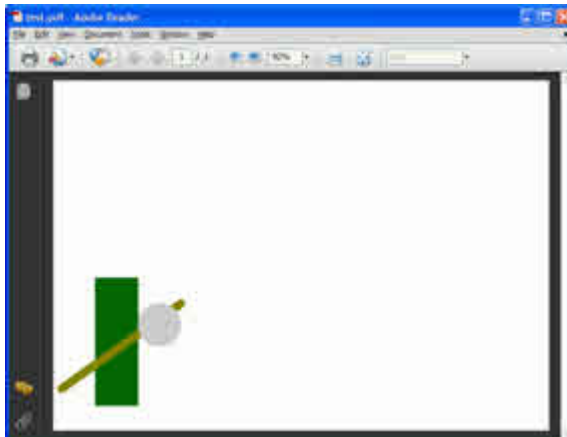
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http://www.adobe.com/devnet/pdf/pdf_reference.html

In Windows programs, there are utility "printer" drivers which allow programs such as Word to generate PDF files using the program's PRINT command. In theory at least it might be possible to write printer drivers for programs like Line Design which allow output as PDF files instead of going direct to printers.

Here's Malcolm's example routine which writes out a very simple PDF file as shown in the illustration. For those who don't enjoy typing in listings, I'll see if I can get it onto the Quanta website for download. Malcolm has used good meaningful variable names etc and useful REM statements so it should be reasonably easy to follow, though obviously not a subject for beginners! I've added a touch of indenting to Malcolm's listing to try to make it a little easier to follow in print.

It writes a file called Test.pdf onto the DATA_USE default drive (lines 1020 and 1030) which you can then transfer to wherever you wish to try to view the file. In my case I moved it to Windows and successfully loaded it into the Adobe reader.



Screen dump of results of loading the test.pdf into Adobe Reader in Windows.

QUANTA Magazine

```
1000 DEFine PROCedure CreatePDF
1010   SetupPDF
1020   FileOut$ = 'Test' : Author$ = 'Unknown' : Creator$ =
'Unknown' : PaperSize = 4 : WhtBG = 1
1030   OPEN_NEW#3,FileOut$&'.PDF'
1040   PDFwidth$ = PDFOut$(PaperW(PaperSize)) : PDFHeight$ =
PDFOut$(PaperH(PaperSize))
1050   PrtHeader
1060   IF NOT WhtBG THEN PDFColour 0,0,0 : PDFBlock
0,0,PaperW(PaperSize),PaperH(PaperSize)
1070   REMark Graphics Start Here *****
1080   PDFColour 0,90,0 : REMark Colour is Red, Green, Blue
0-255
1090   PDFBlock 1000,3000,1000,600 : REMark A Dark Green
1000x3000 mil Block at 1000,600
1100   PDFColour 128,128,0 : REMark Dark Yellow
1110   PDFLine 200,1000,3000,3000,200 : REMark 200 mil Line
from 200,1000 to 3000,3000
1120   PDFColour 200,200,200 : REMark Grey
1130   PDFCircle 2500,2500,1000 : REMark 1000 mil Diameter
Circle at 2500,2500
1140   REMark and Finish Here *****
1150   PrtTrailer
1160   CLOSE#3
1170 END DEFine CreatePDF
1175 :
1180 REMark -----
1185 :
1190 DEFine PROCedure SetupPDF
1200   DIM PDFwidth$(6) : DIM PDFHeight$(6) : DIM FileOut$(20)
: DIM Author$(20) : DIM Creator$(20)
1205   DIM In$(2) : DIM Obj(8) : DIM PaperH(5) : DIM PaperW(5)
: In$ = CHR$(13) & CHR$(10)
1210   PaperH(0) = 33000 : PaperH(1) = 23333 : PaperH(2) =
16500 : PaperH(3) = 11666 : PaperH(4) = 8250 : PaperH(5) =
5833
1220   PaperW(0) = 46666 : PaperW(1) = 33000 : PaperW(2) =
23333 : PaperW(3) = 16500 : PaperW(4) = 11666 : PaperW(5) =
8250
1230 END DEFine SetupPDF
1235 :
1240 REMark -----
1245 :
1250 DEFine PROCedure PrtHeader
1260   BytesSent = 0 : xref = 1262
```

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```
1270 PDFPrint('%PDF-1.3') : Obj(1) = BytesSent
1280 PDFPrint('1 0 obj'&In$&'<<')
1290 PDFPrint(' /Title ('&FileNmExp1$&')'&In$&' /Author
('&Author$&'))
1300 PDFPrint(' /Creator ('&Creator$&' '&sbasRev$&')'&In$&'
/Producer (Malcolm Lear UK)')
1310 PDFPrint(' /CreationDate
('&DATE$&')'&In$&'>>'&In$&'endobj') : Obj(2) = BytesSent
1320 PDFPrint('2 0 obj'&In$&'<<'&In$&' /Type
/Catalog'&In$&' /Outlines 3 0 R'&In$&' /Pages 4 0
R'&In$&'>>'&In$&'endobj') : Obj(3) = BytesSent
1330 PDFPrint('3 0 obj'&In$&'<<'&In$&' /Type
/Outlines'&In$&' /Count 0'&In$&'>>'&In$&'endobj') : Obj(4) =
BytesSent
1340 PDFPrint('4 0 obj'&In$&'<< /Type /Pages'&In$&' /Kids
[5 0 R]'&In$&' /Count 1'&In$&'>>'&In$&'endobj') : Obj(5) =
BytesSent
1350 PDFPrint('5 0 obj'&In$&'<<'&In$&' /Type /Page'&In$&'
/Parent 4 0 R'&In$&' /MediaBox [0 0 '&PDFWidth$&'
'&PDFHeight$&']'&In$&' /Contents 6 0 R'&In$&' /Resources <<
/ProcSet 8 0 R >>'&In$&'>>'&In$&'endobj') : Obj(6) = BytesSent
1360 PDFPrint('6 0 obj'&In$&'<< /Length 7 0 R
>>'&In$&'stream'&In$&'1 j 1 J')
1370 END DEFine PrtHeader
1375 :
1380 REMark -----
1385 :
1390 DEFine PROCedure PrtTrailer
1400 PDFPrint('endstream'&In$&'endobj') : Obj(7) = BytesSent
1410 PDFPrint('7 0 obj'&In$&'639'&In$&'endobj') : Obj(8) =
BytesSent
1420 PDFPrint('8 0 obj'&In$&'[/PDF]'&In$&'endobj') : xref
= BytesSent
1430 PDFPrint('xref'&In$&'0 9')
1440 PDFPrint('0000000000 65535 f')
1450 FOR x = 1 TO 8 : Temp$ = Obj(x) : PDFPrint(FILL$('0',10-
LEN(Temp$))&Temp$&' 0000 n') : END FOR x
1460 PDFPrint('trailer << /Size 9 /Root 2 0 R /Info 1 0 R
>>'&In$&'startxref '&xref&In$&'%%EOF')
1470 END DEFine PrtTrailer
1475 :
1480 REMark -----
1485 :
1490 DEFine PROCedure PDFColour(r,g,b)
```

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```
1500          PDFRed   = INT(r/25.5+.5)/10   :   PDFGreen   =
INT(g/25.5+.5)/10 :   PDFBlue = INT(b/25.5+.5)/10
1510 END DEFine PDFColour
1515 :
1520 REMark -----
1530 DEFine PROCedure PDFCircle(x,y,d)
1540   PDFPrint(PDFRed&' '&PDFGreen&' '&PDFBlue&' RG'&En$)
1550   PDFPrint(PDFOut$(d) &' w '&PDFOut$(x) &' '&PDFOut$(y) &'
m '&PDFOut$(x) &' '&PDFOut$(y) &' l S')
1560 END DEFine PDFCircle
1565 :
1570 REMark -----
1575 :
1580 DEFine PROCedure PDFLine(x1,y1,x2,y2,d)
1590   PDFPrint(PDFRed&' '&PDFGreen&' '&PDFBlue&' RG'&En$)
1600   PDFPrint(PDFOut$(d) &' w '&PDFOut$(x1) &'
'&PDFOut$(y1) &' m '&PDFOut$(x2) &' '&PDFOut$(y2) &' l S')
1610 END DEFine PDFLine
1615 :
1620 REMark -----
1625 :
1630 DEFine PROCedure PDFBlock(w1,h1,x1,y1)
1640   x2 = w1 + x1 : y2 = h1 + y1
1650   PDFPrint(PDFRed&' '&PDFGreen&' '&PDFBlue&' rg
'&PDFOut$(x1) &' '&PDFOut$(y2) &' m '&PDFOut$(x2) &'
'&PDFOut$(y2) &' l '&PDFOut$(x2) &' '&PDFOut$(y1) &' l
'&PDFOut$(x1) &' '&PDFOut$(y1) &' l h f*')
1660 END DEFine PDFBlock
1665 :
1670 REMark -----
1675 :
1680 DEFine FuNction PDFOut$(Coord)
1690   IF Coord > 1 OR Coord < -1 THEN RETURN
INT(Coord*7.2)/100 : ELSE RETURN 0
1700 END DEFine PDFOut$
1705 :
1710 REMark -----
1715 :
1720 DEFine PROCedure PDFPrint(a$)
1730   BytesSent = BytesSent + LEN(a$) + 1
1740   PRINT #3,a$
1750 END DEFine PDFPrint
```

End of Listing

POINTS OF VIEW

[At the end of her article on Sub-Groups and their support in QUANTA Magazine Vol. 27 Iss. 2 April/May 2010 Page 11, Sarah Gilpin said :-

“As Chairman I should like to thank everyone for their points of view on this topic.”

Those of you who subscribe to the ql-users list will be aware that she has been taken seriously for about the last month and opinions have come flooding in. Here are just a couple of them - Ed]

QUANTA Subgroups - Survival.

Geoff Wicks

It is my policy not to take an active part in this group, but I am prepared to make an exception occasionally. In this case because whenever you and I have ever tried to start a discussion on this subject in the past there has been no interest.

As far as I can see the present status is as follows:

There are not 8 subgroups but 6. Surrey and Sussex have been saying for about 4 years now that they have no meeting place. It is reasonable to assume that means they no longer exist. Unless, of course, that group of men under Brighton pier are not alcoholics as I had assumed, but vagrant QL-ers.

I also thought that Solent and Dorset no longer existed, but earlier this year Solent gave new meeting details. It is a pity they did not tell us what their numbers are and what they get up to. At the A.G.M. John Mason confirmed that Dorset still exists, but is getting smaller and now barely viable. Since that time we have had the sad news of John Meadow's death.

You know what happens in London. I believe you are getting smaller, but you do maintain a website and some trade in second hand goods. I think it's a pity the QUANTA hierarchy do not want any more shows in the hall, but the officers have certified themselves as being too decrepit and senile to manage the stairs.

Scotland also maintains a website and is remarkably active for an

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area with so few QL-ers, mainly because of the enthusiasm of John Sadler and George Gwilt. They gave one member good support when he had problems with one of my programs. (Apologies, Colin, I still have not solved the problem.)

Birmingham meet in a local pub and rely on the fact that inner city pubs are delighted to have any customers in the evening. They are a group of about 8 elderly men who meet to talk about everything and occasionally the QL. Interestingly six of them, including the chairman, are not members of QUANTA. (The chairman for reasons of principle.)

Manchester is the largest of the subgroups and you have to touch your forelock when you meet them because they are also the QUANTA toffs. (QUANTA is shortly to be renamed the "External Affairs Branch of the North East Manchester QL User Group"). For a large group they are surprisingly silent about what they get up to, probably because of years of covert plotting to take over QUANTA. I once tried to goad them into telling us something of what they do by suggesting on this list that they were not really QL-ers, but a secret Elvis appreciation society, but it did not work.

Manchester do not have a dedicated website in spite of the fact that the QUANTA toffs are always moaning about how little interest the lesser mortals on other subgroups show in having a dedicated page on the QUANTA website. All very hypocritical when you consider QUANTA's specialist web staff hale from Manchester,

Best wishes,

Geoff

PS: please feel free to reproduce this in its entirety in the QUANTA Magazine, but somehow I don't think you will want to.

[Now whatever makes you think that, Geoff? QUANTA Magazine has always welcomed your points of view. Despite our regular and frequent invitations to attend any/all of our (Nemqlug) meetings, you have never graced us with your presence. Senior Citizen's bus passes are accepted throughout Greater Manchester too!]

Sarah has written a short article based on the views of others on the ql-users list to save me having to quote pages of emails.- ED]

Since my article in QUANTA magazine (April/May) issue there has been an interesting thread on the ql-users list on subgroups initiated by Malcolm Cadman. To date no one has sent any information to the QUANTA Magazine Editor for the Points of View section.

In reply to Malcolm (QL Users June 8th) – support is an ongoing agreement from QUANTA to Subgroups, provided it is considered reasonable and viable. The number of Subgroups is reducing as membership dwindles and members become more concentrated. Malcolm has said that the London Subgroup's membership is currently around 5 regular members. Where I disagree with Malcolm's assessment is in his interpretation of 'Meeting' and 'Venue'. Meeting – 'an assembly of people especially the members of a society' and Venue – 'an appointed meeting place'. Using these dictionary definitions the number of people meeting is immaterial provided there are at least TWO, and the place is immaterial provided it is agreed by the members meeting. Therefore all those Subgroups that meet somewhere that does not require paying a fee are still definitely Subgroups. Equally those Subgroups with no listed venue may agree a different place for the next meeting at the previous meeting. I do agree that some Subgroups may now not exist, but until the QUANTA Editor is told that the information in the magazine should be changed it will remain the same. We have fallen foul of making changes before that should not have been made from 2nd and 3rd hand information. It would be interesting to find out if any of the members from defunct Subgroups such as Essex ever meet for discussions at each others homes.

A question that was raised at the A.G.M. was regarding the numbers attending the meetings in Subgroups who are current QUANTA members. As far as I am aware at the moment, all members of SQLUG (Scotland) and NEMQLUG (Manchester) are currently members of QUANTA. It would be interesting to hear from all other Subgroups on this question.

Geoff Wicks' original contribution to this discussion has been printed in this issue of the magazine – thank you Geoff for your contribution. Like Geoff I rarely write to the ql-users list to avoid any misunderstanding as to whether I am contributing on behalf of QUANTA, NEMQLUG or myself.

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QUANTA Committee, Dilwyn Jones in particular, have made an effort to find out if there are any active Subgroups in Europe, but with no success. There are individuals such as Jochen Merz and Urs Koenig who are very active in arranging shows etc. and Steve Poole who is a prolific contributor to QUANTA magazine, but no evidence of any Overseas Subgroups.

QUANTA would arrange more shows in England if members were prepared to attend them and if more were requested, but when only 17 members can be bothered to come to the A.G.M. and workshop what sort of attendance would there be at a one day workshop? Both Roy Brereton and Malcolm Cadman have offered to host a workshop, but as Roy remarked 'is it worth the effort of the organiser(s) if only a handful of people attend?' It was lack of attendees that persuaded Roy Wood and Ken Bain to stop the Portslade and Byfleet shows.

Geoff has commented that QUANTA will not support a workshop/show in London, claiming that we are too decrepit to negotiate the stairs. I believe it was Geoff who brought it the Committee's attention that a venue offered in Birmingham was unsuitable because of lack of parking and the amount of stairs making it difficult for members bringing equipment. What has changed, Geoff, in three years except that everyone has got even older? It is not just the question of stairs in London, (although anyone who carries large heavy equipment down steep narrow stairs with a restricted view is an accident waiting to happen), there is also congestion charges and parking fees for those who come by car.

Malcolm's suggestion that meeting at someone's home is 'Of course, a last resort to keep things going', is both misleading and not necessarily true. In the case of NEMQLUG it is a choice between meeting at our house where all the QUANTA donated equipment is stored or loading up the back of our car to transport it to some place that we will have to pay for – No brainer, Malcolm. Our meetings are definitely not just a social meeting – we actually do some work, as described by John Gilpin on the ql-users list, for 11 months of the year. Our 12th meeting of the year is a social one, where we have an annual dinner, partly funded by money collected monthly throughout the year and partly by those attending, but always a jolly evening. At NEMQLUG meetings our sitting room table is frequently used as a repair bench for elderly and ailing QL's. Discussions cover members' problems and possible solutions, the QUANTA Library, archiving early QUANTA Magazine issues and the QUANTA Web site

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improvements. Why do we have no web site of our own? – could this be because our web gurus are too busy working on the QUANTA web site?

Thank you to Christopher Cave for confirming that the Surrey Subgroup is alive and well and that Ken Bain is still their contact for new members and visitors. Christopher says that they do not advertise their meeting place because the venue is generously supplied by a non-computer related club. Thank you also to Roy Wood for confirming that the Sussex group has folded and their information will be removed from both the QUANTA Magazine and Website. Solent and Dorset groups are also meeting even though numbers are small.

Are the Subgroups surviving?

The answer is currently – YES and will continue to do so as long as there are enough interested members, who wish to meet whenever and wherever.

There is an open invitation for anyone to come to a NEMQLUG meeting (last Thursday of each month, except December) and we can usually find a bed for what is left of the night for those from further afield. Our times are flexible but the door is open from 7.00 pm until the last person leaves (sometimes the early hours of Friday).

Subgroups Survival - Continued

Christopher Cave

Malcolm knows very well that I am still alive, so perhaps he ought not to be quite so definite about the alleged demise of the Surrey group. Yes, we are reduced in numbers but we do still meet about once a month on a Wednesday evening. We are coy about where since it depends on the generosity of a non-computer related club - should anyone want to come they would need to contact us via Ken Bain (see relevant Quanta page).

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SIR CLIVE

John Gilpin

Birthday Greetings to you Sir Clive on your 70th. Birthday - 30th June 2010. QUANTA Members send you their congratulations on reaching another milestone.

Sinclair QL Re-Releases RWAP Services

We have been working hard to safeguard the future of the Sinclair QL through beginning to compile a repository of QL titles.

The repository enables people to see what software was produced for the Sinclair QL and also to be able to purchase working copies when their microdrive cartridges fail. Where we can, we obtain permission from the copyright holder to re-release items on the market.

This has enabled us to bring some of the titles back to the market as well as re-ignite interest in the Sinclair QL and its emulators.

Old favourites brought back to life include:

- Jungle Eddi
- The Lost Pharaoh
- Pengi
- Microdeal's Flight Simulator
- Microdeal's QL Hopper
- Microdeal's The King
- Cuthbert in Space

We still retain our existing catalogue, including:

- Open Golf
- Stone Raider II
- Hoverzone
- Deathstrike
- Flightdeck

All games are available on disk or for use with Q-emulator on the PC for **ONLY £5 each.**

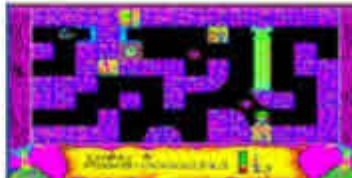
Microdrive versions also available - £10 each

Visit the QL Wiki for more details on software, books and hardware for the Sinclair QL:
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or sellmyretro.com



QL Pengi by Jochen Metz



The Lost Pharaoh by Talost



QL Hopper by Microdeal



The King by Microdeal



Cuthbert in Space by Microdeal

SINCLAIR QL'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR IN RETROSPECT – PART 3 Urs Koenig

[Here is Urs' third and last part of a three part article which continues to give us a fascinating look back over the anniversary year 2009 - Ed]



In this, the last part of the story, I shall cover the second half of the anniversary year!

The birth of the international celebration show

As I said before, I was unable to attend the QUANTA A.G.M. and 'QL-is-25' workshop in April 2009 due to family reasons. It seemed at that time that I would not meet any QLers nor any QL VIPs *[my name for people involved in creating the QL or played a major role in the IT]* in 2009. On the other hand, the constant flow of positive feedback and web activities, even months after the anniversary day, kept me motivated for more.

But what more could be done? It was the feedback from Sir Clive Sinclair himself (well, he delegated Elaine Millar, Director at Sinclair Research Ltd., to write an email to me in his name), which made me dream of an international event with special guests (QL VIPs) as the final **highlight**

of the anniversary year. During May and June evaluation of such an event (where, when, what and how) was done including email conversations with my Swiss QL fellows Markus Dettwiler and Jon Dent. It soon became clear that a 'QL only' event would not attract many people, nowadays, not in Switzerland nor internationally. As I was always interested in the other 68K Micros from the 80's and impressed by the Apple story in particular, the fact that the Apple Macintosh had its 25th anniversary in the same year as the QL was a perfect reason to name the show "QL & Mac are 25".



"QL and Mac are 25" 25th anniversary 2009

The shows logo

The spectrum of the show was widened to include past, present and future innovations in ICT. QL, Mac, iPhone, Mac OS X, and Windows7 were named as topics.

1 occasion - 2 days - 4 free - 8 sessions - 16 systems on exhibition
QL - Mac - iPhone - Mac OS X - Windows7 - AmigaOS4.1
past, present and future - inspiring - enriching - let innovation happen
ICT community event - meet the experts - great fun - don't miss it
no admission fee - free entrance - discounted museum entrance - free giveaways

The shows keywords

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To match the designated mixture of tourist, cultural and technological interests, a perfect location was found, just a doorstep from my home. The brand new Conference Centre in the Verkehrshaus (Swiss Transport Museum) in Lucerne was the choice. By remarkable coincidence the museum had its 50th anniversary (add the 25 years of QL and Mac together !).



The shows location

Towards the end of June the outline of the event became clear and I decided to go along this path and run the show. On June 26th the so called QL VIPs, QUANTA, QL Today and QL Traders were informed by email. Finally on July 1st the event web page was launched and the show was announced to the public by postings in ql-users list, News Groups and by personal emails.

The summer or the not summer (aka "experience some genuine Irish/British weather...")

In July there was not much time for QL issues not even for preparing the announced show. I was not rushed at that time, as there was still plenty of time for the preparations *[I thought so, but time was running fast towards the show]*. The end of my employment at PC-WARE came closer day by day. It was time to bring things (software projects, customer relations) to a good end and to start the summer holidays with my family. After the farewell party at PC-WARE it was 1:30 am when I moved the last personal belongings out of my former office and into my car. It was the QLs and Mac systems I had on display at work for many years.



My QL & Mac stuff I had on display at work.

Pay attention to two special things:

- 1 - The original Swiss Sinclair QL power supply (longer case, on/off switch) on the left;
- 2 - The PSION Work About (EPOC16 OS) in the vitrine behind the Apple printer on the right.

It was sad that I had not enough time to scan the huge pile of documents I intended to do for the Sinclair QL Preservation Project (SQPP). After my employment at PC-WARE I would never (again) have access to such a powerful scanner as the Xerox WorkCentre 7655.

On Tuesday July 28th we headed towards Ireland where we intended to enjoy the summer and cruise the complete south coast from Dublin to Galway and back to Dublin in 3 weeks with a rented campervan.

In short: We completely missed the summer but did enjoy the island!

It was not the first time I had been in Ireland but my other holidays there were pike and perch angling in late autumn where weather doesn't have to be good.

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Ireland always reminds me of Darren Branagh, a good QL fellow which I last met in 2002. In June I notified Darren by email that I would be in Ireland soon, but as I learned later on I used an invalid email address for him, so he did not get the message and I didn't get any response from him.



Darren & Urs in Washington D.C. in summer (!) 2002

While in Ireland I sent an email to Dilwyn Jones on August 2nd using my brand new Apple iPhone 3GS 32GB. I know that Dilwyn and Darren are close friends so I asked for up-to-date contact details for Darren. Dilwyn passed those to me and replied to my complaints about the "summer": "He he, if the weather in Ireland is like it is in Wales at the moment, you will need a boat rather than a car!"

I think they call it "experience some genuine Irish/British weather..." ;-)

On arrival in Galway on Saturday August 8th contact with Darren was made and we did meet for a Pint in a pub in Salthill. Two QLers united after so many years and the thought of not meeting any other QLers in 2009 was banned ;-).

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Darren & Urs in Salthill in "summer" (?) 2009

While shopping in Galway I was looking for the current issue of *retro GAMER* magazine which was to have a QL feature as reported by Rich Mellor in the ql-users mailing list. *Retro GAMER* is not available in Switzerland at all, but should be an easy catch in Ireland?! This was my thought, but I was wrong. No single news stand stocked this magazine. I had more luck in Dublin where I was able to buy my copy and had a quick read in the hotel room. Good to see that the PCW QL coverage got a follow up. Talking of PCW, it was sad news from Kelvyn Taylor, Editor of PCW, that the magazine had to close in summer 2009 after 31 years. The last issue was August 2009.



I had to go a very long way for my copy of the *retro GAMER* magazine July 2009 issue

Movie time

Mid August we returned home and enjoyed the summer in Switzerland! Things also warmed up concerning the upcoming show (10 weeks to go). It was time to motivate and encourage foreigners to attend the show. Good contacts with Tony Firshman [Tony taught me about TinyURL and provided <http://tinyurl.com/ql-mac-show>. Thanks for that Tony.], Dilwyn Jones, Jochen Merz, Anton Preinsack and Bob Spelten to name just a few.

Being aware of the upcoming Micro Men broadcast on BBC4 I took up the line and produced two teaser videos for our show. They were published on my 'YouTube' channel and embedded into the show's webpage. Video production was becoming one of my hobbies in 2009.

In the last two weeks of September I had my long planned angling holiday with my fishing fellows in... – no, not Ireland this time – ... Sweden. We had great fish, weather and time.

Back home preparations for the sessions started and it was much harder than I expected to 1.) find the speakers and 2.) get the sessions prepared. It was nice to get in contact with my ex co-worker Ruben Bakker with whom I programmed an ERP application in the early 90's. He runs his own business now and after a long excursion he came back to the path of the NeXT. He always wanted to have one (a NeXT, not a QL) but he went the commercial way following IBM. After more that 15 years he started programming the NeXT environment, now known as Mac OS X.

October 8th 9:00 pm saw the broadcasting of Micro Men on BBC4. As the program was unavailable in Switzerland I had to wait a few days until Derek Stewart made the movie available to QLers. Thanks for that Derek. Even though I knew the plot in brief for weeks I was impressed by both the drama and the production quality of this docudrama. A side effect of Micro Men being aired was that one of my videos – the QL TV ad – got huge view counts on 'YouTube' (1,200 views on October 8th, 4,000 views in the week following the broadcast of Micro Men).



Micro Men boasted view counts of QL related video(s) on 'YouTube'

To show up or not to show up

After the Micro Men hype calmed down, the day of the show came closer and closer every day. The week before the show kept me busy all day and night. It became clear that no real QL VIPs would show up, even though I was in close contact with Tony Tebby, Rick Dickinson, Chris Scheybeler, Tim Ward and others. As neither Sir Clive Sinclair nor Steve Jobs nor Bill Gates nor Linus Torvalds would show up, the introductory keynote session by a VIP had to be reworked a bit ;-). Wednesday before the show I had the interview at Radio Pilatus, the local radio station and on Friday afternoon the show preview was aired on the Radio.



Radio Pilatus, Lucerne's local radio station aired an interview with me and the show preview. They also put the anniversary and show preview on their webpage.

On Friday evening Markus Dettwiler helped me to collect all the computers for the exhibition, the PA equipment and the two heavy Plasma screens from different locations. Back home I polished my PowerPoint presentations until 1:41 am. Latest addition was the announcement of QemuLator for Mac OS X by Daniele Terdina. After a few hours sleep, D-Day was here. Setup at Verkehrshaus took only about 2 hours and everything was ready on time. Due to the fact that some registered visitors were delayed we started the show three quarters of an hour late. The rest is history and has been reported by Tony Firshman and Dilwyn Jones in both QL Today (V14 I2) and QUANTA magazines (V26 I6).

QUO VADIS
DESIGN

Independent Information
Technology Services

www.ql-qvd.com

The screenshot shows the Quo Vadis Design website interface. At the top left is the logo 'QUO VADIS DESIGN' with the tagline 'Independent Information Technology Services'. To the right is the text 'QL/QDOS/SMSQ/E Software'. Below this is a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'Products', 'Support', 'Company', and 'Contact'. A 'Welcome' section on the left contains a message about the QL software and a photo of a computer setup. A 'News' section in the center lists two items: 'QVD QL News Blog - keep up to date' and 'Quo Vadis Design Website Launched'. On the right, a 'FEATURED PRODUCT' section displays 'QPG II' software with a 'BUY NOW!' button. The footer contains copyright information for 2008 Quo Vadis Design and a list of links for Home, Products, Support, Company, and Contact.

QL/QDOS/SMSQ/E Software

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Check the QL News Blog on
our website for updates.

www.ql-qvd.com/blog



Subscriptions taken online



Final group picture at the very end of the show (some folks have already left the scene)

The aftermath

I needed some rest after the show and had to carry on with many non QL issues. But soon the 'after show' was on schedule. Pictures had to be collected, sorted and published on the web photo gallery. The presentations of the various sessions had to be published for download on the events webpage. The software demonstrated by Simon N Goodwin and myself had to be packaged and published for download on the events webpage. This all took much more time than I expected, but is available online now. Some 25GB (~ 5 hours) of raw video footage are still seeking detailed review, audio and video polish, final cutting and publishing. The first portions of the video material were published in June 2010 [in good Sinclair manner in terms of delivery dates ;-)] on my 'YouTube' channel.

In November and December 2009 I prepared and published 20 Sinclair related videos on 'YouTube'. These consist mainly of talks and impressions of pre 2009 QL shows, snippets of the Micro Men docudrama and talks by Sir Clive Sinclair, David Karlin and Tim Bucher.

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Thanks to Anton Preinsack, Amiga Future magazine had a two page “Sinclair QL – an old relative” and “QL & Mac are 25” show coverage in their issue 82.

Linus’ 40th birthday

I was aware that Linus Torvalds reached his 40th birthday at the end of December 2009. Linus is probably most famous for having initiated the development of Linux kernel. Way back in the 80’s and early 90’s Linus was a QL hacker and programmed a lot on the QL. Unfortunately almost all his QL contributions seemed to be lost until an article with a listing from him came to surface sometime in 2008 [^1]. I wanted to reanimate this piece of software and at present it is a kind of birthday present for Linus and to the world. As often happens, time was running too fast and so my present was “given” one day late in the form of a video on ‘YouTube’ and a dedicated webpage.

Say goodbye to QL VIPs with the next Sinclair anniversary

New year 2010 passed and it was time to end the QL anniversary activities. What better day, than the next Sinclair 25th anniversary (the C5 launch on January 10th) to say goodbye to the QL VIPs and to close the QL anniversary celebration year.



Sir Clive Sinclair at the launch press conference of his C5 “electric car”. In hindsight it was a sad day. Look at Sir Clive’s face in the picture. He must have guessed it. The failure of the C5 project heralded the end of Sinclair enterprises taking his computers into downturn with it.

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As you read this the next Sinclair anniversary will have passed. On July 30th Clive celebrated his 70th birthday. For sure this day made him smile unlike the C5 disaster.

Statistics

The last substantial thing to be added is the web statistics of the anniversary year. The complete web statistics are available online on the web in my QL pictures and photo gallery. For better reading and to save print and postage costs of the magazine I will only name the most impressive figures in this article:

- 11,922 unique visitors on the site (some 2000+ of them due to the blogging of Linus)
- 6,246 visitors on the anniversary page
- 1,325 downloads of the anniversary PowerPoint presentation
- 464 downloads of QPC (the virtual QL to run on the PC under Windows)
- 16,000+ video views on my 'YouTube' channel

References/External Links

I did not add type-in links/URLs to this article. But for each topic there are specific information, links and downloads on the recently updated "QL is 25" and "QL & Mac are 25" webpages:

- "QL is 25" – the anniversary: <http://tinyurl.com/ql-is-25>
"QL & Mac are 25" – the show: <http://tinyurl.com/ql-mac-show>
"Linus QL" – Linus Torvalds QL contributions: <http://tinyurl.com/Linus-QL>
"Sir Clive is 70" – the 2010 birthday celebration: <http://tinyurl.com/Clive-is-70>

If you're interested in more audio/visual QL resources (including the pictures from this article) you may try out one or more of the following Internet sites:

- A playlist of 14+ videos telling you the QL story: <http://tinyurl.com/ql-story>
QL picture and photo gallery – more than 1000 unique pictures and photos about the QL, ordered by topic: <http://tinyurl.com/ql-pics>
QLvsJAGUAR video channel – a channel on 'YouTube' featuring the QL: <http://tinyurl.com/ql-videos>

Sinclair QL Preservation Project (SQPP) – a webpage with info and downloads about the QL: <http://tinyurl.com/sqpp25>

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To name just a few, here are some other great web-resources by enthusiasts who played a role in the QL-is-25 bash:

Javier Guerra (aka badaman) QL documentation webpage:

<http://www.speccy.org/sinclairql/archivo/docs/docs.htm>

Spanish QL community blog (QBlog): <http://sinclairqls.wordpress.com>

Dilwyn Jones's website: <http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/index.html>

Rich Mellor's QL wiki: http://www.rwapadventures.com/ql_wiki

Desperately seeking QL

Even though I made good progress in completing my QL collection last year I'm still looking for the following:

- Video footage on the Sinclair/QL in TV programs (on VHS tape or as files).
- Photographs of Sinclair/QL appearances in IT-shows such as "Personal Computer World show" (PCW), London, "Which Computer?" show, Birmingham, "Earl's Court Computer Fair", London or "ZX Microfair", London (1984 to 1988).
- More software for GST's 68K/OS beside the two bundled Microdrive cartridges.
- More QL software/articles written by Linus Torvalds.
- Sinclair QL FB ROM (physical EPROMs or binary file).
- Sinclair QL PM ROM (physical EPROMs or binary file).
- Any Sinclair QL Professional Computer, serial number (S/N) pre D04-001371.
- Any Sinclair QL Professional Computer, S/N post D16-122418, a D17 would be very nice.
- Any Sinclair QL Professional Computer US-Edition, S/N post S13-005854.
- Any Sinclair QL Professional Computer German-Edition, S/N post SG18-010800.
- Other Sinclair QL regional editions (Spanish, French, Italian, Danish, Turkish, Greek, Portuguese, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish and Arabic).
- Any names or contacts with people who worked as a subcontractor of Sinclair Research like Timex, Thorn (EMI), Datatech or AB Electronics
- QUEST CP/M 68K for the QL.
- Internal dual EPROM OS switch-board (holds 2x 27512).
- Any CST Thor owners? Please contact me.

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Just drop me a line

(mailto:urs_koenig@bluewin.ch).

Thank you very much.

Here we are at the end of my QL-is-25 story. I hope you enjoyed this journey through 2009. I made many nice personal contacts and got a lot of positive comments and feedback. So for me it was worth the time spent.

Always remember: **QL forever!**

*Lucerne, June 21st 2010 (summer 2010 should start now!)
Urs König*

P.S. For Sinclair and QL friends I've set up a private webpage with 1.5 GBytes of hand selected downloads. You can choose from 4 full length movies and 5 magazine articles. This private webpage has the following URL:

<http://www.glvsiaguar.homepage.bluewin.ch/FriendsOnly.html>

[^1] Blog entry first mentioning the Linus Torvalds GMOVE article and program listing for the QL:

<http://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=248149>

Vintage Computer Festival 2010 Rich Mellor

I attended this event (Bletchley Park - 19th/20th June 2010) as a trader, offering a range of second hand items which are normally sold from my RWAP Software website

www.rwapsoftware.co.uk

as well as helping to promote 'SellMyRetro.com' as the new trading site for vintage / retro computers and electronics. I had also arranged to promote both QUANTA - the Sinclair QL User Group

www.quanta.org.uk

and the QL Today magazine

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(www.qltoday.com)

to show the continued support for the Sinclair QL home computer and hopefully encourage a few more people to subscribe.

We were expecting a busy weekend, particularly when we tried booking a hotel room to find nearly all of them in the area were fully booked several weeks in advance (but then we found out that there was a motorcycle meeting at nearby Silverstone). However, we were overwhelmed with the sheer number of people who did attend the Vintage Computer Festival (over 1800 people over the two days), providing a chance for us to meet with some old customers and others active on the retro computer scene.

There were guided tours of both Bletchley Park itself (home of the World War II code breakers) and the National Museum of Computing, providing plenty of interest for all family members, including the newly rebuilt colossus (a huge computer made from valves) through to a ZX80 displaying on a bubble-shaped TV and some bits of transport from a Sinclair C5 to a harrier jumpjet outside the marquee where we had our stall.

Amongst the people, demonstrating items and selling at the show, there were plenty of new and old products, with just the odd video games console to be seen. The star attractions for me had to be the Sinclair ZX Spectrum running Spectranet (a full network interface with TCP/IP for the Sinclair ZX Spectrum - 4 were networked together to an old MicroVAX machine which was acting as a fileserver, whilst one Spectrum was sending information across to Twitter); the prototype SD Card interface for the Sinclair ZX81; and seeing three of the Dragon 32 Professional (or Alpha) machines which was that company's attempt to create a business machine, but never actually made it to market.

There was even a display of some Compukit 101 computers and a very early digital clock, built from relays and uniselectors. Newly launched at the show was the Amiga X1000 computer, much awaited, it got a mass audience for its launch. Not sure how many people ordered one on the day but we wish them well with this project.

We ourselves, had some new items on our stall which also merited a fever pitch of discussion.

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People were also amazed to see the Cambridge Z88 portable computer and found revived interest in the machine once they saw it in action running the latest OZ v4.2 operating system (which allows you to easily change between languages) and the brand new card for the computer which incorporates both 512MB RAM and 512MB Flash Eprom on the same slot, meaning the Z88 can now run with up to 2 1/2 MB RAM + 512MB Flash memory. The card can also be configured to supply 1MB RAM or 1MB Flash memory, so you can maximise the storage space available on the Z88 to suit your own needs, whilst still running it for several days on a set of AA batteries!

The Sinclair QL also found new interest - many people remembered the machine as one they had always wanted to try, but had never managed to buy, and were amazed to see the range of software and hardware which we had for sale for this computer, proving that it was never just a business machine. The fact that its user group (QUANTA) and the QL Today magazine continue running also show the devotion to this machine felt by its users. Hopefully some people may take the plunge to give it a go having whetted their appetites at the show.

All in all, the Vintage Computer Festival was a great success and we hope that it will run again next year.



Rich Mellor's Trading stand at the Vintage Computer Festival at Bletchley Park.

When I first started writing SuperBASIC programs in 1984 I was quite amazed by the speed of them when they ran. But fairly soon I began to read adverts for the Lightning 'accelerator' and then for the 'Turbo' Compiler. It appeared that compiled code could run up to a hundred times faster than Interpreted Basic, so of course I felt I was missing out on something. It took me a long time to get around to it, but at a Brussels Show I took the plunge after talking to a Digital Precision salesman and accepting that I too could get faster programs and bought Turbo.

Once home, I first sat down and read the voluminous Turbo manual a few times and then tried compiling a few of my own programs. After some optimisation, I did manage to get them to run about twelve times faster, which was a good deal better than under Basic. (It turned out that programs using huge multi-dimensional string arrays could indeed run 100 times faster, but this was an exception...). But still I was a bit disappointed, as it was clear that commercial graphics games programs ran much faster still, so I still had much room for improvement.

But I was running Turbo on my 128Kb JM QL, so memory was short and I bought a Gold Card at the next show, followed a year later by a swap for SuperGoldCard. This again multiplied my program speed considerably, and the QL was altogether a different beast. But on some sorting code I was developing I was still not reaching speeds quoted for professional routines, and felt something was amiss. I mentioned this to my French Sinclair Importer who replied that I should write directly in Machine Code, and he would sell me an Assembler to do just that.

But I waited a while, while I got information on machine code, which came from books on the 68000 processor family. This gave a detailed description of how the Motorola chip registers are addressed, what its complete instruction set was, and how to access them from QDOS routines, traps and vectors... a totally absconce dog's breakfast that I thought I had understood until it came down to actually trying to write some assembly code!

Now for a step back in time... In 1980, every day, I was doing hundreds of trigonometrical calculations manually, and decided to buy a programmable hand-held calculator to do all the hard slog for me. But this meant I had to learn Texas Instruments calculator code and write the

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programs myself, or else buy very expensive professional code. Or, the calculator I bought was a relatively inexpensive but highly versatile TI56 with but fifty program steps, and I had to cram all my regular operations into just this space. After a couple of weeks studying the instructions I began to understand the logic behind the machine code, and after a little fumbling about wrote a compact program which would do the bulk of my calculations, which I of course checked against known results, and it worked fine.

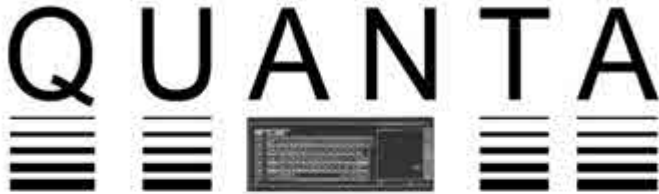
Now TI Code simply uses standard arithmetic notation, (whereas the alternative HP system uses Reverse Polish notation), which meant you punch a keyed-in figure into a numbered memory register, where it remains until you retrieve it for an operation, or swap it into another register, as required. The program consists of inputting data to numbered registers, operating on them using whatever function is required, storing the partial and cumulated results, and finally displaying the answers. So for instance an addition program could be :

```
1 Store inkeyed number in register 1 (x STO 1)
2 PAUSE (R/S)
3 store inkeyed number in register 2 (x STO 2)
4 PAUSE (R/S)
5 Add display in register 2 to register 1 (x SUM 1)
6 Store displayed answer in register 3 (x STO 3)
7 STOP (R/S)
```

[nb: 'x' is the figure on display or keyed in. Such code can of course be optimised, but it is useful for the purposes of demonstration].

It can be seen that TI machine code is very straightforward to learn. As I didn't want to type in a new program every time I did a different calculation, I soon bought a TI59 which had many hundreds of program steps, memory partitions and a magnetic card reader to save and recall stored programs with. But the programming instructions were the same! In this way I very soon speeded up most calculations in my surveying job.

Then I decided it would be even more efficient not only to have calculators to do all the maths, but also a computer to draw all the plans and projects for me too! To cut a long story short, I bought a QL for many valid reasons, but especially as it had scaled graphics and could therefore drive a wide plotter.



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Now I come back to QL Assembly code. I thought that after easily dominating TI machine code, that learning 68000 code would be a doddle, but that was not to be... A TI59 has dozens of registers like the Motorola chip, but the latter has a vast number of different ways of how to address them. This makes for big headaches when you try to write a routine, as you have to remember all the different side-effects of addressing particular registers in different ways. And the mnemonics are not really useful either, as they are not very user-friendly. The 68000 is often stated to be very efficient because of this flexibility, but in fact a more rigorously structured protocol would be far better to aid comprehension and no doubt increase the number of competent programmers actually using it.

I very much admire the likes of Norman Dunbar, George Gwilt or Simon Goodwin who seem to find reading 68000 language child's play, but I need to spend hours studying their code, only to find that I have in the meantime forgotten what the first parts did, mainly because I find it too hard to memorise what all the register variants were doing as I go along!

With this reality facing me, I acquired George Gwilt's GWASL and dived in at the deep end to translate a SuperBASIC sorting routine into machine code. But soon I gave up, Bruno Coativy kindly did the job and Lo! and Behold! there was the program sorting over 250,000 integers per second... a vast speed improvement over Basic. But still I persevered, dug out a tree-sorting routine which I had written in Basic, and structured it <'as if it were'> written in machine code. This took some considerable mental acrobatics, but ever so slowly it was converted into a format <'as if it were'> running on a basic 'pseudo-assembler', and after some tweaking it ran under GWASL when finally translated.

I felt I had finally achieved a way to master machine code, but within a few days I had forgotten how I had done it and moreover there was the huge bulk of QDOS, traps and vectors still waiting to be grappled with. So I really did give up, as I felt the few SuperBASIC programs I had written that really needed machine code speed would not merit the enormous learning curve needed to achieve what was after all only an exercise of style!

Nowadays, I am pretty much satisfied with QPC2 program speed on my 2.8+Ghz PC, except in the domain of Graphics. My PC has a good graphics card, but I have never read how to access it from SuperBASIC, or 'C' or anything else for that matter. For that would have allowed my PC to draw millions of polygons per second on 3D perspective animation

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programs, which I will never finish developing if I am restricted to normal QPC drawing speeds, which are essentially too slow to enable program development times to be acceptable.

Intel have announced that they are developing processors with graphics card functions built onto the main processor. This will allow 'ray-tracing' animations in real-time, thereby accelerating output by a factor of hundreds. (Ray-tracing calculates shaded scenes by tracing every light-ray from its source, reflecting off different surfaces until it hits the 'screen', if it ever does so. For 32 K of pixels, this originally took several hours per frame even on fast machines!). At present, the fastest professional games use pseudo-perspective drawn by hand to create the illusion of 3D in shaded relief. Perhaps soon I will be able to buy a new ray-tracing system and finally finish my programming projects at top speed?

But I wish 68000 machine-coding were as easy to write as SuperBASIC It's no wonder people invented high-level languages...

Happy Coding...

Steve Poole.

[Steve has requested that all the programmes he has written for QUANTA Magazine be made available on the public pages of the QUANTA Website. This is something that the committee are investigating and hopefully this facility will be made available to all Qlers so that they can download quite long listings from the site and not have to re-type them from the Magazine's pages - Thank you Steve - Ed]

FOR SALE AND WANTED

[This is a welcome return of this feature which has not been used for some time. If anyone has items that they wish to get rid of or items they want to purchase please send details to:-

Editor@quanta.org.uk

And we will advertise them Free of Charge in your Magazine - Ed]

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Centronics GLP printer [VGC]
Model #3101 ser. M44208995, 240v 50Hz
Serial D25 and Centronics parallel connectors.
Complete with :-

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View this item at:-

www.davidbuckley.net/DB/sidetable/GLP/CentronicsGLP.htm

Also the following part boxes of fanfold listing paper:-

Box of A4(ish) 12" long fanfold printer paper ~5.5"stack
+
Box of A4(ish) 11" long fanfold printer paper ~5.5"stack

www.davidbuckley.net/DB/sidetable/PrinterPaper2Boxes-o480.JPG

Also a wide carriage DM printer which I need to get out of the (now clean) loft.

Any sensible offers will be considered for the above items to cover the shipping costs (only) to your address

Contact David Buckley at:-

librarian@quanta.org.uk

HILARY AND ME

Darren Branagh

Many of you will have read with dismay about the recent plight of an Irish QL user, my dear friend, Hilary O'Kelly. Sadly, his home burnt to the ground last month, the result of a dodgy gas heater and a lot of readily flammable paper nearby. It left a man in his late 70's without a home, without anything - all he had to his name was the clothes he was standing in, and a few bits and pieces some neighbours, like my sister, were able to salvage from the charred remains.

When I heard, I knew I had to do something to help - it was Hilary that introduced me to the QL many, many years earlier, and I felt I owed him

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a lot - I have met some of my closest friends via the QL, and it opened many adventures for me, as a user and later as a trader via QCELT.

So, I wrote an email to Dilwyn Jones - always a good start when you want something to happen in the QL world. Dilwyn made contact with QL today and QUANTA, and to be honest the response was fantastic - John Gilpin deserves a medal. To cut a long story short, through John's hard work and QUANTA's generosity, Hilary now has a QL again, to use and hopefully take his mind off the awful dilemma he has found himself in. So, thanks to all that helped - particularly John's wonderful daughter Mazz who works for DHL - who couriered the QL to Ireland free of charge. The whole thing renews your faith in human nature.

I'm also glad to report that Hilary now has a "home" again - he had no money to rebuild, but via the locals in the area, whip-rounds, and some fundraising, he got a mobile home erected on the land beside the old house. he lives alone with his dog, so it's more than adequate. Last I heard, he was about to move in, and it had been wired for electricity, and neighbours and local businesses had donated food, clothing, even kettles and microwaves etc to furnish it for him. So, he's back on track. he has told me he will write something once he is settled in, so I will let him tell you more - I will however go back a little further.

Hilary is a remarkable man. He may be nearing 80, but he still rambles the mountains of Wicklow where he lives, for miles at a time with his Dog, and is seldom home during a fine day. He hasn't had a car for years - in fact my sister bought his last one when she was learning to drive, so he relies on the local shop for his food and ventures into the big smoke of Dublin when necessary. He walks everywhere, and he's fitter than I am, and I'm half his age. He went to Trinity College (probably the finest school in Europe, definitely the best in Ireland) and became an engineer. He retired early, in his 50's, and wondered what to do with himself, so decided to buy a QL.

He told me once that it was an expensive item, about 700 quid in Ireland at the time, but he qualified his purchase thus "I reckoned it was cheaper to learn to program as a hobby than going to the pub!" I think he was right.

I first met him when Dana Wynter (yes, the Oscar winning film actress) who lives on our road introduced my family to him, by getting Hilary

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to deliver Xmas present to us on her behalf, as she was spending Xmas on her ranch in California. Hilary arrived on Xmas day, just as we were sitting down to dinner. My Dad persuaded him to stay for a bite, and the rest, as they say, is history.

We got talking - I think this was about 1994 or so. I told him I was into computers, having had a ZX Spectrum since 1983, and my dad had just got a state of the art 486 for the office... with a huge 40 MB hard drive, and 16 MB of RAM. Impressive, eh? :)

Hilary invited me down to see his QL. I had always wanted to use one, knowing what a great machine the spec was, I was looking forward to meeting its big brother. I loved it, especially the Microdrives, and QL Chess was (and still is) visually stunning.

A few months later, Hilary was going on a sailing trip with his friend, Norman. Norman owned a fine boat and took Hilary along as a navigator from time to time, and they travelled the world. He would be away for several months this time, so Hilary wondered would I mind "looking after" his QL for him. I jumped at the chance!!!

During that time, I devoured most of the QL manual, and taught myself the fundamentals of SuperBASIC. I loved the machine. I wished I owned one, but they were very rare in Ireland - especially in the mid 90's. Any I did find were costing hundreds. Something a student like me didn't have.

So, I had to give it back, but visited Hilary a lot to use it and talk computers over a coffee and a Mars bar. Then, about a year or so later, I was at a car boot sale with my Mum - who loves antiques and would never miss a market - I often picked up bits n' bobs - keyboards, a printer, some PC magazines, but nothing prepared me for the find of a lifetime - there, sticking out of a cardboard box, was the unmistakable black lines of a QL!!

I rubbed my eyes, sure I was seeing things. It must be broken I thought. I leaned over and looked inside the box - it got better. there were 2 QL's - one open and had some chips missing, and one that looked perfect. There was also a Tandata modem stack, An Expanderam, loads of Microdrive cartridges, some commercial software and games, piles of QL User mags, ICE on Eprom, and a joystick and mouse, and a few other bits and bobs. I struggled to draw breath. I asked the guy how much he wanted

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for it all - "Gi'me 50 quid" he replied. I almost broke his arm giving him the money. It felt like Xmas!!! I ran to the car with a smile four feet wide.

I got into the QL in a big way - Digital precision had closed down, and Hilary had invested in the DP Collection, all of their programs zipped onto 10 DD disks. Boy, did we have fun with that, unzipping programs and playing with them. I remember the night we got Conqueror running - Hilary had never used it because his hadn't got a copy of MS-DOS to run on it, and I had the copy from my PC. This was my first encounter with emulation, a topic I love to death. Still find it remarkably clever to emulate a PC on a QL, albeit slowly. Hilary was even able to type PC formatted documents via a small DOS based office suite i used called 'tool-works' office manager.

Alf Kendal's program using BPUT commands to get a Hewlett Packard DP500 working on the QL was a godsend, it was on the DP collection, and Hilary got my old PC printer and using that, kept the newsletter of the local branch of the ISPCA going for over 500 people every few months for many years. He even wrote a program he called 'ENVELOPER' to print envelopes properly on the DP500.

He also wrote some pretty amazing programs for the QL too - a really good 3D tic-tac-toe game called '3DOXO', a completely amazing yachting navigational program called 'LANDFALL', which is still being updated, and an Enigma Simulator - which emulated the secret encryption coding machine of the second world war, cracked by Bletchley Park. I have asked him to get these into the QUANTA library, hopefully he will do that soon.

And so it went on, and on. I have lost count of the number of nights I have left Hilary's house at 5 am, having been programming all night with him, to walk the 3 miles uphill back to my house. Initially, it was all served with a coffee, and the occasional pizza, and this was replaced with a bottle of Johny Walker, Powers or Jamesons in later years - whatever was the cheapest at the duty free!! Later on, it was a luxury when I could afford a car of my own, and I could be home in 5 minutes. It also started out with a walk home with a couple of Microdrive cartridges, hoping my QL would read them and all the hard work from our collective minds that night. Thankfully, I got a cheap trump card and twin drives from Ron Dunnnett, and as Hilary had the same now, we moved to DD disks.

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Thanks to my QL involvement, I have met many close friends, Dilwyn, Roy, Tony, Steve, Jochen, Malcolm, etc etc. I regard them all as my best friends. So, in a round about way, I've a lot to thank old Hilary for.

So, there you go, a little filler for QUANTA Magazine, and a walk down memory lane for me. Hopefully it was an enjoyable read and not too boring.... Hopefully now Hilary is back in QL land again, he may contribute a bit in future - are you there Hilary???? :)

QL-Users-Meeting in Vienna

Jochen Merz

I would like to start this article with a big THANK YOU to Gerhard Plavec, who organised the show, Franz Eder and Karl Flicker, who did "the work" ... and this is how I would like to end it. It all started in Luzern ... the show which Urs König organised last year. The question: 'Where do we have next year's show?' had – I thought – an easy answer: Vienna! Vienna, the place many people always wanted to go and had never been before. My wife and I have been to Vienna before two years ago and we instantly fell in love with this city (we like Austria anyway) ... and I knew from Tony Tebby's visit last year that he and his wife always wanted to see Vienna – AND, luckily, Gerhard Plavec, who lives near to Vienna, took the idea up and said, he would do it.

He did it properly – he even prepared a website in various languages for the visit with directions, things to do etc.

The meeting was planned from Thursday to Sunday – quite long, but a good idea for visitors from abroad, especially if they have a long journey – Thursday was a bank holiday, so it was easy to get a "long" weekend.

The venue was located outside Vienna, reachable by train and car (45 minutes or so)... with masses of space in Gerhard's house and a large garden. The "main" day was planned to be Saturday, and there was a plan to visit a nearby railway museum together on Sunday.

My wife and I decided to have our summer holidays in Vienna after the show, and to get there a day or two earlier to avoid the heavy traffic of the bank holiday on Thursday. We stayed in the city of Vienna, and Tony Firshman and Marcel Kilgus booked into the same hotel.

Marcel arrived Friday morning, and as Tony Firshman was expected to arrive mid-day, we took a short sightseeing trip of inner Vienna to give Marcel, at least, a quick impression.

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After that, Marcel and Tony went to see Schloß Schönbrunn (we'd been there the day before, in slightly clearer weather, and not so extremely hot, although the weather was great anyway) and we met in the evening to go the famous Prater to find nice food – and fun!

As the brand new chain carousel just opened (world's highest, by the way), Marcel and I took the chance for a ride – high, yes ... too fast for a good view, not fast enough to get sick ... refreshing, yes! (Pic 1.) If you want to have a look at Vienna, better take the old Ferris Wheel, which most of you probably know from movies.



Pic 1.

The food was great too, and it got quite late ... but no problem in Vienna, the public transport is one of the best systems we've come across – no need to run after a bus, tram or tube – the next one will arrive 2 or 3 minutes later, or, if it gets towards midnight, 7 or 8 minutes. What a dream. And the best of it – a week's ticket costs only 14 EUR.

In the meantime, Per Witte from Norway had arrived at the hotel.

On Saturday, we five set off by car and headed for the show. It was really hot (around 30 degrees or so) and after we left Vienna we drove through interesting country side ... with oil pumps all over the place. A bit more desert and you'd have thought you'd travelled back in time to the "Dallas" TV series (I never liked it, but I remember there were oil pumps in the trailer).

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We arrived at Gerhard's house – and some of the Austrian QLers we knew from the good old times at Heidenreichstein, Salzburg or Berchtesgaden meetings were already there. Gerhard showed us the various rooms (pic 2. to the left), all filled with historical computing equipment of all sorts – what an amazing collection this was! Of course, QLs in all varieties and ATARIs with QL emulators were present as well (pics 3. and pic 4.).



Pic 2.



Pic 3.



Pic 4.

It was hot, and we went into the garden – more familiar faces! And a gauge 1 model train track! What a surprise! Had I known this before, I could have brought one of my locomotives ... it would have been the first journey in free wilderness for it.

A large and heavy steam engine (a real one), taking three years to build was heated up to generate the required pressure – and then it went. Slight modifications on the tracks were required and quickly done, and then it worked (pic 5.)

As you can see from the pictures (pic 6.), model strains are still fascinating “big boys toys” ... this is also what made me buy my first computer (to control my model railway in 1980). Computing quickly took over most of my time and about 5 or 6 years ago, I came back to model trains.



Pic 5.



Pic 6.



Pic 7.

In the meantime, more and more visitors arrived – it was a mix from the UK, France, Norway, Germany, Austria, Switzerland ... apologies if I forgot to list a country.

Interesting computer talks went on, especially between Wolfgang Lenerz and Tony Tebby (which led Tony to update the next parts of his 25 years series in QL Today). Other chats were happening inside the house (pic 7.), and not just about computing. It was great to meet friends which I have not seen for years.

Later on, the question about dinner came up – so meat and sausages were bought in a supermarket nearby and the grill was heated up. Chats carried on ... and time passed by quickly.

Not much computing was going on, though. I had set up a table inside the house, but the weather was so great that it kept most of the visitors outside. Not much to see on a computer display in the sunlight, so there was no point in bringing the laptops outside until it got darker. I updated some disks and CDs for some customers, but I only brought a limited number of items ... mainly QL Today's. I managed to get the latest issue ready earlier than scheduled, to have it ready at the show – so I could personally deliver it to several readers ... and mailed the rest on Monday after the show to all the other readers.

Later on, the wives of some visitors who spent some time in Vienna looking at cultural things, arrived ... so

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the barbecue continued. Tony Firshman uploaded pictures through his laptop (Pic 8), which had a WLAN connection to my laptop, which acted as a wireless router and gave access to the internet through my mobile phone (usually at speeds of up to 7.2kBit), but in the countryside only at GPRS speed. Still, better than nothing, and free...



Pic 8.



Pic 9.

Gerhard showed us very interesting videos of the latest robot competition which he visited and recorded recently in Rapperswil, Switzerland. I guess we have to visit one of the future competitions of these robot wars, especially as Rapperswil is opposite to Pfäffikon (Tony and Marcel will remember the slides in the water-park there, I believe ... well, Tony may remember the hot, yellow-watered pool better than the slides – but it is not what you may think now!).

It was rather late when we had seen the various recordings, and as we had a good drive ahead of us, we said ‘bye bye ‘til tomorrow’ and drove back to Vienna.

Sunday was planned for a joint visit to the railway Museum at Strasshof. We first met at Gerhard’s place and drove together to Strasshof, which was very close nearby.

The museum was large, with masses of locomotives of all sorts, mainly steam engines (pic 9), and many of them were still in working condition or at least moveable. There were also electrical and diesel engines further down the exhibition hall.

Also, small trains on model railways were buzzing around in a different building and in a coach, and there was also a club house further down the tracks who re-built the area in scale 1:87.

Franz Eder led us around (pic 10) and explained very interesting things about the machines, how they worked and the history ... he is very interested

in it as a hobby. We also discovered that several of the Austrian QLers worked for the railway...



Pic 10.



Pic 11.

Tony Firshman took a whole series of pictures when I placed our mascot “Klein-Schniffi” between the two wheels of a steam engine (pic 11) ... he found this very funny, especially after having seen that we took pictures with Klein-Schniffi at Schönbrunn and other places. Well, Klein-Schniffi has been with us to many places, we got safely back and home, so here’s the proof that mascots do work (I hope you don’t think by now I’m completely mad) :-)

We spent several hours together at the museum and then, unfortunately, had to head back to Vienna in the afternoon, as Marcel and Tony Firshman had to catch their flights back to Germany and the UK.

Per Witte was left – his flight was booked for Monday, so we spent the rest of the evening together, having a good time with cold beers sitting at the Donau, chatting and enjoying the view, weather and atmosphere.

It is difficult to say whether the meeting was well-visited or not, but that does not really count nowadays in my opinion. It was great to meet up after so many years, and there was definitely not enough time for enough chats... but that’s a good reason to meet again, isn’t it?

It needs to be stressed that great care was taken by the organisers to ensure everybody was happy, had enough to drink – it was a very enjoyable weekend. So, here is our THANK YOU once again – and hopefully until next time!

Which leaves the question: next time ... where will we have our “big” international meeting? And when will be the next meeting in Vienna? It is not only us who thought “we have to come back!” – and this would give friends like Dilwyn who couldn’t make it, although they really wanted to, another chance.



Marcel Kilgus ponders over what kind of QL he could make from all the model train parts

MORE QUANTA NEWS

Dilwyn Jones

Austrian QL Meeting Video

Anton Preinsack has made a video of some of the events at the Austrian QL Meeting.

You can see the video here, on 'YouTube':

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJPLZCKVpHI>

It's about 6 minutes long and features rare QL hardware, such as a 25 year old QL with built in 68020 card, QXT640 units, Q-Talk speech synthesiser and so on. It also features Urs Koenig talking with Tony Tebby about a proposed QCF card for QL, and see if you can identify the well known QLer who tries to hide from the camera by covering his eyes with his hands..

SUBGROUP MEETINGS

THE WEST MIDLANDS QL USER GROUP

The meeting place is called the Bull, the address is 1 Price Street, Birmingham, B4 6JU, approx 7 minutes walk from Snow Hill main-line railway station and has ample street parking nearby. Meetings are open to QUANTA members and non-members alike.

After your first meeting you're expected to pay £1 each time towards the organisation and monthly newsletter costs - except once a year when the group pays all those who attend a pound instead ;-)

We provide food twice a year for those who attend the AGM and the group's birthday party and at meetings we discuss all sorts of things, QL-related and otherwise, usually from about 8:20pm onwards till 10:30 or later. The group owns QL hardware, a disk library and subscribes to relevant magazines. People can join the mailing list for £3.50 per year, even if they can't attend regularly.

Meetings : Meetings are usually on the first and third Monday of each month (but not on bank holidays unless the previous one was cancelled for that reason).

Contact : The contact number remains Mike Bedford White's, on 0121 605 4438, anytime after 11am.

Email: mikebwhite@blueyonder.co.uk

QUANTA DORSET SUBGROUP

Meetings are held, on the second Sunday of each month at the Merley Community Centre in Harrier Drive, Merley, just south of Wimborne Minster. Time: 2.00 pm. to 5.00 pm. All are welcome.

John Mason, 01425 275894.

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LONDON QL AND QUANTA GROUP

Meetings are held in the School Room, which is the basement of the Borough Welsh Congregational Chapel, 90, Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1. This is almost opposite the junction with Marshalsea Road, at the other end of which, 5 minutes walk away, is the Borough Underground Station. Free parking is easily available in Southwark Bridge Road for road users, Cyclists are welcome.

Members currently each pay a subscription of £45 per year towards the cost of the hire of the hall and a small additional charge is made for tea/coffee - biscuits are then provided free.

Please bring your QL equipment if possible, all types welcome, e.g., PC portable running emulators. The Group has some systems stored at the venue for its use. In addition, there are lots of donated second user equipment, books, magazines, etc, available for purchase.

The London Group is moving over from 10 Meetings a Year, to 8 Meetings a Year.

In 2010 the Group will take a two month break in July and August, and then resume Meetings in September.

The Group will not meet in December 2010.

Therefore the next 3 Meetings will be - September, October and November.

The details of the new 8 Meetings scheduled for 2011, will be announced nearer the time.

Malcolm Cadman: Tel: 020 8691 5780

email: QL@mcad.demon.co.uk

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NEMQLUG - THE NORTH EAST MANCHESTER QL USER GROUP

Meetings are held at 181, Urmston Lane, Stretford, Manchester. M32 9EH (Near Junction 7 of M60 Motorway - Was Junction 7 M63 Motorway). Our informal meetings start at 7 p.m. and finish at 11 pm. All welcome.

Meets on the last Thursday of each month (except December).

John/Sarah Gilpin 0161-865 2872 (thegilpins@btopenworld.com)

SCOTTISH QL USERS GROUP

SQLUG meets at George Gwilt's home every second Sunday in the month. Please contact George Gwilt before coming to get the location.

Gdgqler@gmail.com.

SOLENT SUBGROUP

Meets at Botley Market Hall, all welcome. Park at the back and use side entrance.

1st Saturday of the month from 2.00 pm to 6.00 pm.

Graham Evans, Tel: 023 8040 3350.

SURREY QUANTA SUBGROUP (SQSG)

The group is currently trying other venues in the Leatherhead - Epsom area. If you plan to attend but do not get our emails, please phone or email Ken Bain for the latest location.

Meetings are 8.00 to 10.00 pm. On the last Wednesday of each month except December.

Ken Bain - 01932 - 347 432 (to midnight), kenb@bcs.org.uk

